



Board of Barbering & Cosmetology

Electrology Fact Sheet

August 2004

CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET

What is electrology (a.k.a. electrolysis)?

- Electrolysis is the removal of unwanted facial and/or body hair by use of a tiny needle or probe that conducts electric current.

Do electrologists need to be licensed?

- In California, only state-licensed electrologists in state-licensed salons or barbershops may legally perform electrology services. As of July 2004, there were approximately 2,300 licensed electrologists in the state.

Can cosmetologists and estheticians perform electrolysis services?

- No, cosmetologists and estheticians may not remove unwanted body/facial hair by electrolysis.
- They may remove superfluous hair from clients by several other means.
- Neither Cosmetologists nor Estheticians may use laser hair removal devices or any other device labeled by the federal Food and Drug Administration as a "medical device."

What happens to the skin with electrolysis?

- After electrolysis, your skin will usually be slightly red and irritated for up to several hours. If you have more severe symptoms, like large scabs or blistering, or if symptoms last for several weeks, check with your doctor.
- Be sure that the service you're paying for is actually electrolysis and not simply electronic tweezing, which may not permanently remove the hair.

Is there anything with the skin that electrologists can't do?

- Yes, licensed electrologists may not administer any type of medication for pain control.